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Opera Chic

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May 05, 2007

I'll Try Anything As Long As I Look Good

Hay guys! Guess what? Classical music is kewl again. We are like the most relevant people in the whole world!!!11eleven!!!11

Well...at least according to the fashionably cooltural élite behind NYC's Milk (ph: mAElk) Studios, who recently had the epiphany to begin a classical music series that, instead of catering to AARP-card holders and poor students, would instead lure models, fashion conspirators, and various actors/cling-ons.

No fair-weather scensters could be reached for comment at this time, still sleeping-off a post-party delirium from moshing and skanking to Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* (huh k). But sources close to Opera Chic indicate that scensters and their various sycophants are all jumping on the classical music scene bandwagon, because it suddenly got cool or something. "They are desperate to cling to any sort of identity while searching for social acceptance," said our local expert/party-crasher, "I've never heard of such a lame excuse for trying to appear cultured."

~~~

You can read about it in this Sunday's NYTimes Style pages.

Launched in February 2007, Milk Studios (Katie Ford, the chief executive of Ford Models is one of the founders) launched "Milk Salon", where four classical musicians have been invited throughout the year to act as moving, emoting background props at their parties. Violinist Janine Jansen just performed ("Summer" from *The Four Seasons*, that obscure work Milk Studios rescued from oblivion), and past guest pianist Yundi Li rocked the casbah a few months ago (holy \$hit! with an appearance by Terry "Yes, That Is Actually A Tranny" Richardson).

"Our purpose is to expose these top-class artists to a new group of people who are more downtown — trendsetters, fashion people — in hopes of spreading classical music to a new generation,' said the dapper Mr. Rassi [a partner in Milk Studios], explaining the concept behind this quarterly classical-music recital series, titled Milk Salon."

(That is, if 'classical music' is composed entirely of totally bootleg versions of Vivaldi and Mozart hits you would find on track listings of "The Best Classical Mix...Ever" or like "The Most Relaxing Classical Album in the World...Ever!") They may as well just pipe-in Mouret's *rondeau* from "Symphonies and Fanfares for the King's Supper" and pretend they're on "Masterpiece Theatre".

Rawk on with your bad selves, Milk Salon...RAWK ON!

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I blame Rufus Wainwright

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New York fashion photography studio Milk Studios recently launched Milk Salon, a series of invitation-only classical-music recitals, whose identity has been created by the New York office of Base, an international creative direction and brand develop

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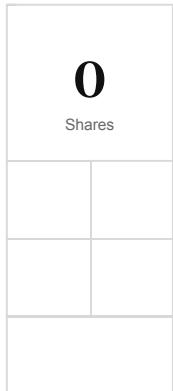
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# Milk Studios: Milk Salon Identity

New York fashion photography studio Milk Studios recently launched Milk Salon, a series of invitation-only classical-music recitals, whose identity has been created by the New York office of Base, an international creative direction and brand develop



Editor's Pick

New York fashion photography studio Milk Studios recently launched Milk Salon, a series of invitation-only classical-music recitals, whose identity has been created by the New York office of



Base, an international creative direction and brand development firm. "The overall Salon identity is intended to balance the richness and tradition of classical music and the intimate environment of the classic French salon with the directness and contemporary aesthetic of downtown New York," explains Base partner Geoff Cook. "Hence the reference to the treble clef in the 'S' of Salon and the cursive script juxtaposed with the geometric Milk logo and its modern type composition."

Moreover, each Salon event has a theme, and the second and latest performance, by Dutch violinist Janine Jansen, "was all about spring and the fact that her music is described as 'fresh and energetic,'" he adds. "These themes drove the concept and color choices behind this performance. The environment decor and the Jaeger-LeCoultre lounge [redacted] where the luxury watches of this principal sponsor of Salon were displayed [redacted] were awash in white light and complemented with modern white furniture. The invitation was an acrylic box, in fluorescent light green and containing a single hyacinth stem."

Similarly, for the premier Salon performance, a recital by pianist Yundi Li that took place the night before Valentine's Day, the invite was a translucent red acrylic box containing a bed of red roses (see the PDF). Roses were chosen "not only for the association with Valentine's Day but more so because of the tradition in the classical performing arts of roses being tossed onstage in recognition of a spectacular performance," says Cook. "We carried this theme through to the Salon environment itself, bathing it in red light." In addition, he notes that, Milk Salon attendees being a veritable A-list of New York scenesters, "we've heard that the invitation boxes have become something of collectors' items, turning up in some very high-profile offices and homes across the city."

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# PMc PATRICKMcMULLAN.COM

**Milk, CAMI, and Universal Music Group present Milk Salon, with a performance by Pianist Yundi Li**

Milk Studios, NYC  
 © Patrick McMullan  
 Tuesday, February 13, 2007  
 Photo - David X Prutting/PatrickMcMullan.com

178 Images

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Yundi Li



Yundi Li



Mazdack Rassi, Yundi Li



Mazdack Rassi, Jean-Jacques Cesbron, Marc Johnston



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Atmosphere





Craig Ross, Giada Torri



Moishe Mana, Ofir Mana, Karim Amatullah



Alejandro Cardenas, Saskia Miller



Amber Feld, Kiley Bates, Catherine Kim



Anouschka Izmirlian, Keren Craig



Anouschka Izmirlian, Yundi Li, John Demsey, Jean-Jacques Cesbron



Anouschka Izmirlian, Yundi Li



Anne Joyce Harriette de Jersey, David Lopez



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Adam Shapiro, Pippa Vosper



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Cindy McBennett, Geoff Cook



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David Bouley



Diego Garcia, Genevieve Jones



Diego Garcia, Lyman Carter, Amy Wesson



Elia Zois, Mariana Zois



Francesco Clemente, Juline Samuels

Francesco Clemente, ?  
(Who Am I?)Genevieve Jones, Lyman Carter,  
Keren Craig

Genevieve Jones



Genevieve Jones



Genevieve Jones



Greg Kadel, Beri Smither



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**Jamie Burke, Mazdack Rassi,  
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Tuesday, December 21, 2010

### **Milk Salon Holiday Concert & Charity Auction Benefiting the Somaly Mam Foundation**

Hi,



On a recent temperate **Friday evening, Social Lauren Bush** hosted on behalf of **Milk Salon** a presentation of the **Salome Chamber Orchestra's Holiday Concert** featuring international soloist **David Aaron Carpenter**. The **3 hour event** offered silent auction with works from **Enrique Badalescu, Gabrielle Revere, Gre Kadel, Guillermo de Zamacona, Hunter Barnes, James Macari, John Guerrero, Jonathan Mannion, Mick Rock, Norman Jena Roy, Sante D'Orazio, Tiziano Magni, Walter Chin, Zoe Buckman, etc.**, with both ticket sales and art purchases directly benefiting the **Somaly Mam Foundation**.

Present were a diverse mixture of **Milk Salon**\*\*\* regulars and fans of both **David Carpenter** and the **Salome Chamber Orchestra**.

Pre-show, we spoke with **Lauren Bush** --model, social and most importantly advocate-- about what inspired her to host the evening, "I've been a supporter since I met **Somaly** who was introduced through a friend...she's just one of those people you meet, and find so inspiring. I've read her book, and since then I've given her book to

friends, it's called the Road to Innocence, the most heart-wrenching story, but yet the most hopeful."

The highlight of the evening was **David Aaron Carpenter's** fresh take on familiar classical music encompassing **Vivaldi's Four Season's** and other favorites. His engaging and poetic repertoire with each musical piece was truly breathtaking with the **Salome Chamber Orchestra** a fitting collaborative group.

**\*\*\*-Milk Salon is a classical music performance series, dedicated to bringing today's preeminent talents together in an intimate setting, and expanding the existing classical**

**repertoire and audience through collaboration with some of the world's greatest soloists including Yundi Li and Janine Jansen**

**\*photos by The Quest for "it"**



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# Milk, CAMI, and Universal Music Group present Milk Salon, with a performance by Pianist Yundi Li

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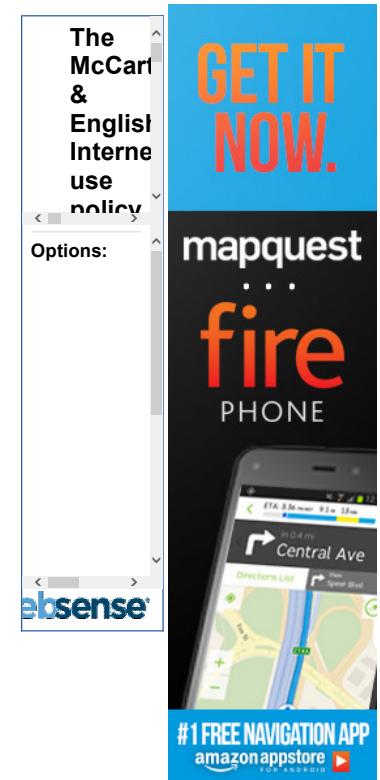
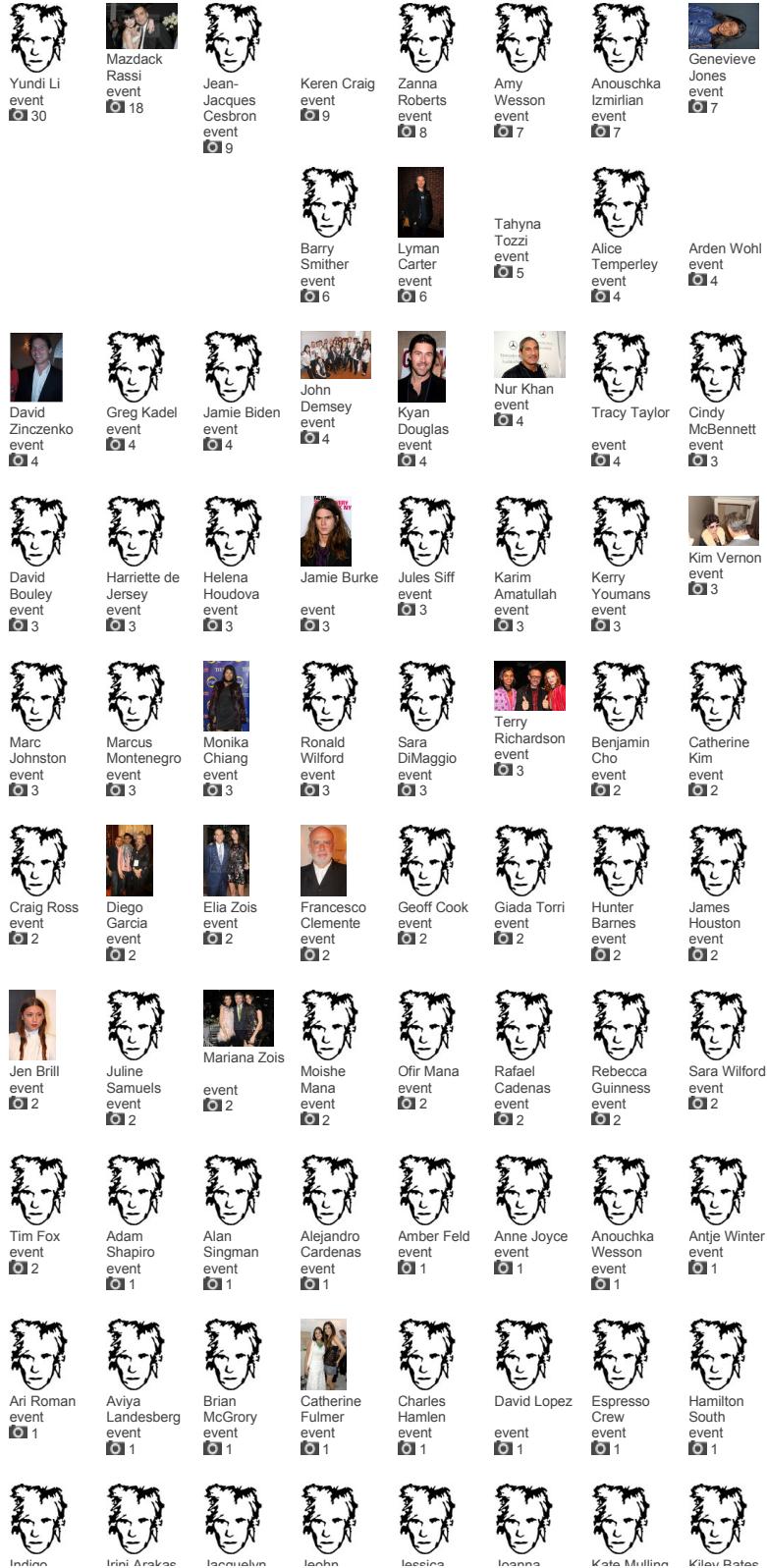
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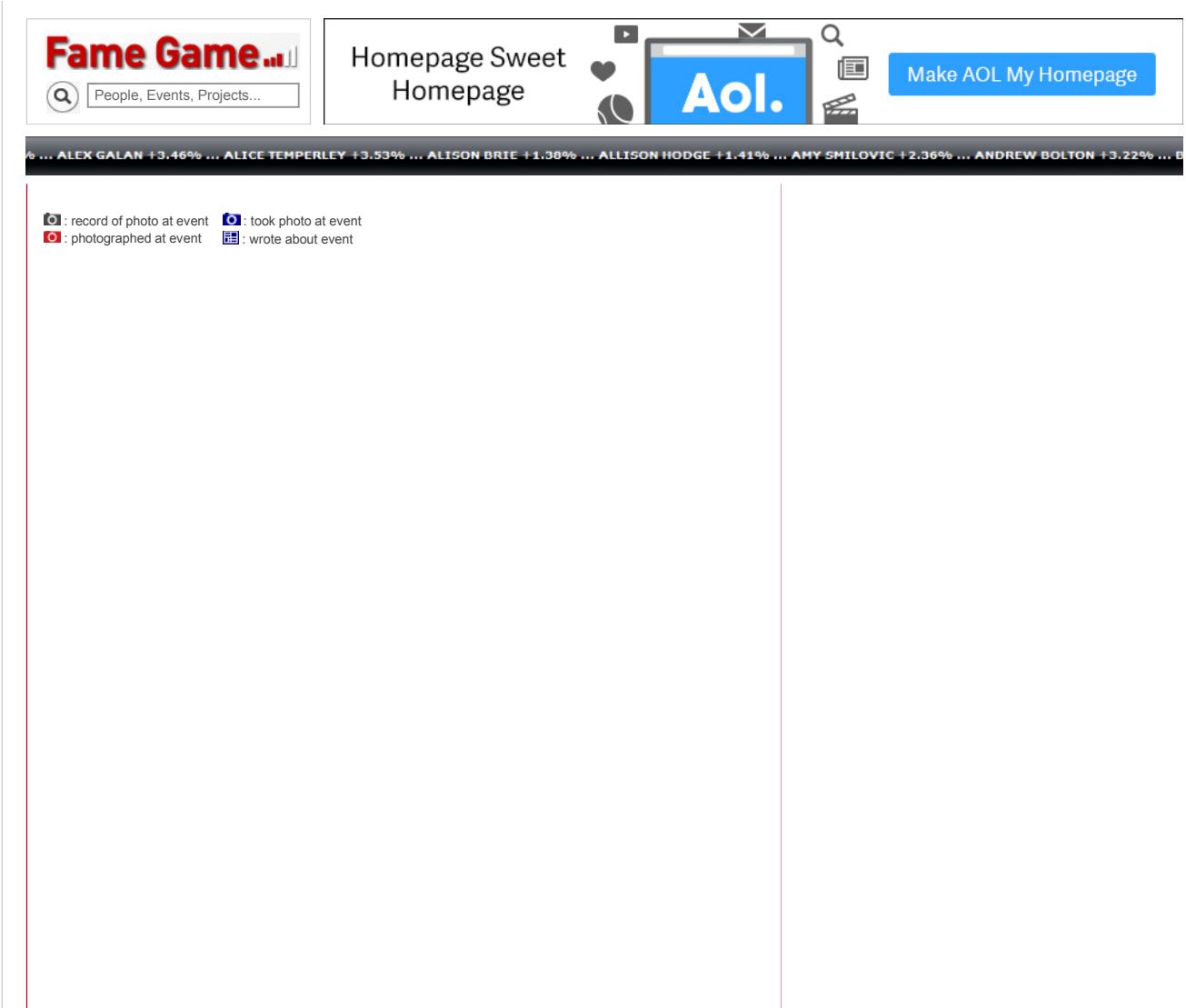
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The screenshot shows the homepage of the Fame Game website. At the top left is the 'Fame Game' logo with a red 'Fame' and a blue 'Game'. Below it is a search bar with the placeholder 'People, Events, Projects...'. To the right is a large 'Homepage Sweet Homepage' button with a heart icon. In the center is a large 'Aol.' logo with a blue background and white text, surrounded by icons for video, mail, search, and a clapperboard. To the right is a 'Make AOL My Homepage' button. Below these elements is a black banner with white text showing a list of names and percentages: '... ALEX GALAN +3.46% ... ALICE TEMPERLEY +3.53% ... ALISON BRIE +1.38% ... ALLISON HODGE +1.41% ... AMY SMILOVIC +2.36% ... ANDREW BOLTON +3.22% ...'. At the bottom left of the page is a legend: a blue camera icon for 'record of photo at event', a blue photo icon for 'took photo at event', a blue camera with a red border for 'photographed at event', and a blue document icon for 'wrote about event'.

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## Vivaldi Arrives Fashionably Late



Christopher Smith for The New York Times

**SEEN AND HEARD** Members of the fashion world listening to classical music at the Milk Studios on West 15th Street in Manhattan.

By ALEX WILLIAMS  
Published: May 6, 2007

IN fashion, everything old eventually becomes new again. No matter how old.



Christopher Smith for The New York Times  
Janine Jansen was one of the performers.

Still, it was surprising to see about 85 of the fashion world's young tastemakers turn out on Thursday not to see Lily Allen or Arcade Fire, but the Dutch violinist Janine Jansen. The private recital wasn't at [Carnegie Hall](#), that Midtown stalwart that is probably more foreign to many of those in attendance than Paris or Milan, and where she was scheduled to play two days later. Instead, it took place at one of their more familiar stomping grounds: Milk Studios on West 15th Street in Manhattan, one of New York's best known fashion photography studios.

The idea, ostensibly, was not just to turn the world's finest musicians into mere theme-party props to impress jaded scenesters, insisted Mazdack Rassi, a partner in Milk Studios — himself, a scenester of the first order, though he sounded far from jaded on this evening.

"Our purpose is to expose these top-class artists to a new group of people who are more downtown — trendsetters, fashion people — in hopes of spreading classical music to a new generation," said the dapper Mr. Rassi, explaining the concept behind this quarterly classical-music recital series, titled Milk Salon.

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He launched the series in February (the first concert featured the Chinese pianist Yundi Li) with friend Jean Jacques Cesbron, the president of the classical music talent agency Columbia Artists Music, and with Marc Johnston, a public relations and marketing executive in the classical music field.

Mr. Rassi and Mr. Cesbron, whose relationship spans the fabled uptown/downtown divide, both felt a little stranded — professionally and psychically — on his own side of 23rd Street, Mr. Rassi said, so they figured they could create a cultural collision, if not a welcome break from the same old fashion-world nighttime routine: models and actresses drinking, dancing on tables, and trying to stay off of Page Six. Instead, they conspired to import a more refined culture to the meatpacking district.

Lindsay Lohan, who appears in the current advertising campaign for Miu Miu, was not in attendance.

The larger goal, Mr. Cesbron explained, against a backdrop of 10-foot-tall windows overlooking the Hudson River before the performance on Thursday, was to free 200-year-old music from the stigma that it appeals to people who seem nearly that old themselves.

“Classical music is not stuffy,” he said, adding, “it just needs a different setting.”

Thursday’s boldface crowd — who are forever chasing the *next* with the voracity of Pac-Man — already seemed a step ahead of him. Georgina Chapman, a designer for Marchesa, said that [Mozart](#)’s Requiem leaves her feeling “entranced.” Her design partner, Keren Craig, spoke rhapsodically about the first time she saw “Tosca” at age 11. The model Petra Nemcova, meanwhile, explained that Dvorak, a fellow Czech, sounds as sexy to her as any pulsating rock music.

Judging by the testimonials from such fashion A-listers — the crowd also included the art world fixture Hope Atherton and the models Lara Stone and Tasha Tilberg — classical music is not only not dead to those who typically talk Versace more than Vivaldi, but actually functions as something of a musical form of Xanax to chill them out.

Paulo Melim Andersson of Chloé listens to Bach and Schumann while conjuring design images, he said. “Classical music is so intimate, it’s wonderful to have in your head,” he said. “It’s like a soundtrack of your private life.”

The designer Doo-Ri Chung said she and her colleagues listen to classical music throughout the day at her studio on 38th Street. Indie rock proved too jarring to the creative mind-set— no sooner do you calibrate your vibe to an ethereal Shins album, then bang, the playlist jerks you over into the twee pop eclecticism of the band, of Montreal. “Classical music is much more mid-level,” she said.

Like the Milk Salon founders, Katie Ford, the chief executive of Ford Models, is host to salons on a regular basis in her SoHo home, and a half dozen of them have included classical music performances. “There’s a natural link,” Ms. Ford said, adding, “People in different creative fields tend to appreciate each other.”

Meanwhile, those in the classical music industry, where major label album sales have withered over the years, seem to appreciate any help they can get in coercing the artfully dyed patrons of the nearby Sally Hershberger salon on 14th Street to join the sea of gray heads that blanket most concert halls.

In a telephone conversation before the show, Eric Latzky, the chief spokesman for the [New York Philharmonic](#), suggested “high energy” classical works would work just as well as techno as a soundtrack at future tent shows — despite the fact that classical music is about as common on fashion runways as love handles. “It could be anything from a ubiquitous piece like Mozart’s ‘Turkish March,’ or something contemporary, like ‘Scherzoid,’ by Mark-Anthony Turnage,” he argued.



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Following Ms. Jansen's scintillating encore of Vivaldi's "Summer" at the event, Maxwell, the R&B musician, leaped to his feet in a spirited standing ovation. Afterward, he launched into an animated air-violin performance of his own for a smiling companion.

Despite the warm reception, Ms. Jansen admitted that she felt more nervous before a roomful of fashion elites than she would in front of a packed house at the Royal Albert Hall.

"Maybe part of it is knowing that this is not what they would usually listen to," she said.

Perhaps she need not have worried. She looked, well, fashionable enough in her embroidered, red Escada top.

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